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## Editorials

### PROPHETISM AND PRE-PROPHETISM

What reader of the Bible does not recognize the fact that with Amos and Hosea a new era is introduced into the history of biblical thought? These prophets set the fashion of those who are to follow them along several lines. The fashion thus set had to do not only with the external form of prophecy, but also with the inner content. From this time forward the prophetic sermons are written out, while heretofore they could hardly be called sermons and were not written. Likewise, from this time onward the prophet seems more and more to separate himself from the great majority of prophets of which he was one, as well as from his fellow-men, and to preach, not that which was to please the multitude, but that which distressed and angered them. Our conceptions of prophecy rest upon data connected with Amos, Hosea, and their followers. It will be remembered that Amos himself says (7:14), "I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet." What did he mean? The word *nabhi* translated in this passage stood in the mind of Amos for a body of men living in his own times. With these he had no official connection. The *nebhiim* had occupied the field in the centuries that preceded Amos. One of the most important of the number was Micaiah-ben-Imlah. The story of his attitude toward the kings of Israel and Judah is noteworthy. He was the first of all the representatives of Old Testament prophecy to oppose the "crowds" of prophets. He knew that *they* did not know the mind of God. He stood above them and against them. Thus it was with all the prophets who followed him, and thus the distinction between true and false prophecy was established.

The prophets beginning with Amos had forerunners—those who prepared the way. These were Samuel and the *nebhiim* of his day, Nathan, Ahijah, Micaiah, Elijah, and Elisha, with the hundreds of *nebhiim* in their day. These men did not write. They were preachers, and the prophets followed. They were pre-prophets. The work of Moses in a still earlier period, which briefly we may call Mosaism, passed into this pre-prophetism in the days of Samuel. Pre-prophetism, after two centuries of history, passed into prophetism, and still later prophetism, when its work was finished, finally passed into Judaism. The line is a long one. The marks of transition are not easy to be discovered, but the progress onward is as tangible as if it were presented in a panorama to the eye itself. And as the facts of history and the truth of revelation thus arrange themselves in orderly progress, we see new evidence of the presence of a guiding spirit, an all-controlling mind, an infinite Creator. Lines of separation are sometimes too closely drawn, but the distinction between pre-prophetism and prophetism, the former growing out of Mosaism, and the latter growing into Judaism, is a distinction which will help the earnest student to understand the divine wisdom shown in revelation.

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#### AMOS AND HOSEA

Has it ever seemed quite true that a cold moralist might be as religious as an emotional mystic? Is the kingdom of God large enough perhaps to include men of both the types just mentioned? If we take the testimony of the moralist and accept his representations on the subject, we might be inclined to call the religious feeling, so warmly and tangibly expressed by the mystic, as nothing but emotionalism. This is a term not infrequently applied to it. On the other hand, if we take the testimony of the mystic and believe what he says about the moralist, the latter will be ruled out of the kingdom of God and designated a barbarian. But there has never been a time in history when men of both these types did not live and do good and serve God. For some men cold moralism is the only religion possible. Would you take it away from them? Is morality altogether of no value? For others emotion and tender regard for others are the expression of the religious feeling. Would you deprive them of the pleasure and the suffering which go therewith? Cannot